



Gate City Immigrant Initiative

May 24, 2017

9:00AM – 10:30AM

Nashua City Hall Auditorium

Gate City Immigrant Initiative is a subcommittee of the Nashua Cultural Connections Committee.

Present: Sam Cooper-Wall, Dominique Boutaud, Sylvia Gale, Jason Wakefield, Jim Muise, Rich Cullen, Pedro Altagracia, Donna Marceau, Sharon Dalton, Shayana Owen, Alyssa Walker, Juana Fields, Viola Katusiime, Kim Kleiner, Lynn Clowes, Jenn Hosking (co-chair)

Commenced at 9:00am

1. Call to Order/Introductions

2. Co-Chair updates

- Jenn distributed a flyer on behalf of Lauren publicizing the World Refugee Day celebration at the Adult Learning Center on Tuesday, June 20th from 11am-12pm. Kim Kleiner and Pedro Altagracia will represent the mayor's office at the event. All are welcome.
- Jenn distributed a flyer on behalf of Lauren publicizing the multicultural celebration at the summer fun kickoff event June 3rd from 10am-1pm. The Adult Learning Center stepped in this year to help plan this portion of the event planned by the Emerging Leaders of Color in previous years. If anyone is interested in hosting a table to share their culture, they should contact Lauren.
- Jenn provided an update on the fall symposium planning. A save the date will be distributed electronically the first week of June. The next planning meeting is scheduled for June 21st at 9am at City Hall in room 208.
- Jenn discussed the GATE CITY Cohort 2 graduation she attended Tuesday afternoon at Nashua High North. GATE CITY stands for Getting All Teachers ESOL Certified in Two+ Years. One of the participants will be presenting on the education panel at the fall symposium.

3. Cultural Navigators update

- No representative was present for an update.

4. Resettlement Agency update

- Ascentria – Lynn Clowes discussed her work teaching cultural orientation classes for refugees. She teaches 9 week classes held at the adult learning center on Wednesdays 12:15-2:30pm. It

was mentioned that it might be a good fit for the Cultural Navigators to attend some of the classes to make a local connection with newcomers. Sharon will connect Lynn with Adelina Hernandez, the Cultural Navigators Coordinator.

Ascentria is interested in storage space in Nashua to store donations until they are needed for individuals and families resettled in Nashua. Donna mentioned there is a small office at the United Way office that has Ascentria's name on it and suggested Lynn connect with the United Way to see if that space will fit their needs.

Last week 3 Congolese were resettled to Nashua. This week 4 Burmese are coming to Nashua.

- International Institute – No representative was present to give an update.

5. Member updates

- Viola Katusiime shared an upcoming prayer vigil for immigrants planned by Granite State Organizing Project and community partners. It will take place June 6th 8:30-9:30am outside of the ICE offices, at the Norris Cotton Federal Building (275 Chestnut Street, Manchester). The prayer vigil will be solemn, and will include songs, prayers, a walking meditation, kneeling, silence and music.
- Sharon Dalton shared the current issue of [Parable Magazine](#) which profiled Carlos Camacho for his work in the community.
- Donna Marceau reminded the group of the Employment Connect event scheduled for September 20th, 11am-2p, at St. Patricks Gymnasium in Nashua. This event provides haircuts, job interviews, work attire, etc.
- Jim Muise discussed his work with the Downtown Crossing group at the Main St. Methodist Church helping refugees. He expressed his concern about the lack of affordable housing in Nashua for newcomers and asked if there is anything being done to address this issue. He also asked if there is anyone that can help with the day to day assistance needed like opening mail, navigating social services. It was suggested the Cultural Navigators may be able to step into this role. The group agreed lots of good work is happening in the city but there is still work to be done to get all this work connected to each other.
- Kim shared details about the community center being developed at 36 Arlington St. The location was identified as a neighborhood that has a high concentration of resettled citizens. Seventy agencies are participating in the planning and organization of services and programs at the center. The board of directors has 25 members and the center will also have a Director who will be a city employee.
- Kim shared the [Meals for Kids program](#) running this summer. Volunteers are needed and can register on the program [website](#).
 - Details: Six different non-profits, including the Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, and the Mayor's Office are working together to end childhood hunger in Nashua. Our pilot program will provide easy access to meals at various locations around the Crown Hill, Dr. Crisp Elementary School area. The program will run from June 22nd through August 28th. We'll need approximately 100 volunteers to commit to 1 1/2 - 2 hour shifts at meal times to distribute meals at various pick-up locations.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 28, 2017 – 9:00 AM-10:30 AM at Nashua City Hall Auditorium